

77-7159  
3 MAR 1977

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Administration

FROM : Harry E. Fitzwater  
Director of Training

SUBJECT : Request for Reimbursement for Certain  
CIA Attendees at Federal Executive  
Institute Luncheon Briefing

REFERENCE : Memo to DTR from EO/DDA, dated 27 May 1976,  
(DDA 76-2679), Subject: Revision to Policy  
on Representation Expenses, with Attachment

1. The Seminar on Foreign Policy of the Federal Executive Institute (FEI) will visit the Agency on 15 March for a briefing on CIA mission and organization, and the DCI and CIA role in the National Security Council System. Following the precedent of the 1975 visit, a luncheon for the group in the Executive Dining Room is planned to which we have invited some of the CIA personnel who are graduates of FEI.

STATINTL 2. The briefing will be conducted by Dr. Sayre Stevens, Deputy Director for Intelligence, who has agreed also to serve as luncheon host; Mr. John McMahon, Associate Deputy to the DCI for the Intelligence Community; and Mr. [REDACTED] a National Intelligence Officer. The Acting Director of Central Intelligence has also been invited to participate in the briefing but has not yet formally responded. (He is not free to attend the luncheon.) STATINTL

3. This memorandum concerns the method of payment for the luncheon costs of the three categories of participants in this program listed below. It requests reimbursement for Category C.

Category A. The Seminar members and staff from the FEI. (FEI has agreed to pay.)

Category B. CIA employees invited who are FEI graduates. (The invitation to them has been extended on the understanding they will pay for themselves.)

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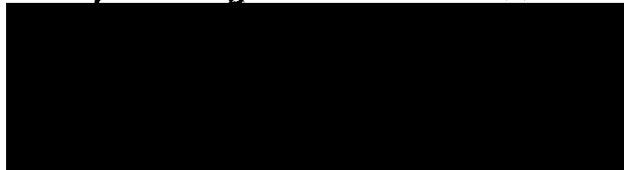
SUBJECT: Request for Reimbursement for Certain CIA Attendees  
at Federal Executive Institute Luncheon Briefing

Category C. The three invited speakers and the  
OTR Course Coordinator. The cost of these four  
persons at \$3.85 each is \$15.40.

4. The reference requires the approval of the Deputy  
Director for this charge to the DCI Imprest Fund. The  
justification for reimbursement is that the Category C  
members are participating in this function as a part of the  
duties of their offices. Their participation in the luncheon  
should be regarded as an extension of their briefing respon-  
sibilities. The involvement of Category C is primarily  
official. The involvement of Category B, on the other hand,  
is largely social.

STATINTL

5. We would appreciate your signature below to  
indicate your approval.



Harry E. Fitzwater

Attachment

APPROVED : /s/ John F. Blake 7 MAR 1977  
Deputy Director for Administration Date

DISAPPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Director for Administration Date

Distribution:

Orig - Return to DTR

2 - DDA Chrono, Subject

**Next 1 Page(s) In Document Exempt**

DDA 76-2197

17 May 1976

DDI 76-2197
Executive Registry
76-7612/3

MEMORANDUM FOR: See Distribution

FROM : George Bush  
Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT : Official Reception and Representation  
Expenses at Headquarters [REDACTED]

STATINTL

REFERENCE : Memo for Multiple Adses. from DCI, dtd  
1 April 1976; Subj: Official Reception  
and Representation Expenses at Headquarters

1. In view of the authorization contained in the FY 1976 budget appropriation, the referent is rescinded and the following policy pertaining to the expenditure of U.S. Government funds for official reception and representation purposes at Headquarters [REDACTED] is substituted therefor:

STATINTL

a. Appropriated funds may be used for official reception and representation expenses, including the expenses of cooperating U.S. Government officials at meetings concerned with the official functions of the Central Intelligence Agency. Agency employees in attendance at such meetings will normally be expected to pay for meals served to them. When a Deputy Director determines that this would be inappropriate and that the employees should be reimbursed for expenses incident to their attendance, the reason therefor must be stated on the voucher.

b. A Deputy Director or Independent Office Head is authorized to certify claims for reimbursement of expenses incurred for official reception and representation purposes and to submit these claims (in the format attached) to the Executive Secretary who is designated the single senior official who may approve the vouchers for payment or reimbursement. Since the burden should be a limited one, these responsibilities will be exercised without further delegation.

c. As a general policy the payment of expenses incurred for reception and representation purposes at functions attended solely by individuals whose services are funded by the Central Intelligence Agency, or by one of its proprietary organizations or for whose services the CIA reimburses another agency, will not be authorized. There may, however, in the view of a Deputy Director or an Independent Office Head, be unusual circumstances justifying an exception. Such an exception shall require the prior approval of the Director.

d. Due to a specific limitation on the total amount of money authorized for "official reception and representation expenses," funds for these purposes are included in the O/DCI budget and all such expenditures will be costed to the DCI Imprest Fund.

2. The foregoing policy and procedures do not apply to representation expenses incurred at overseas field stations for operational purposes involving non U.S. Government employees. Existing authorities governing these kinds of activities have not been modified.

3. Funds appropriated for the purpose of reception and representation expenses are limited. It is expected that Deputy Directors and Heads of Independent Offices will scrutinize each request to assure that the need for incurring such an expense is justified and that a benefit to the U.S. Government is derived.

STATINTL



George Bush

Attachments

- A. Memorandum Format
- B. Voucher Format

MEMORANDUM FOR: Executive Secretary, CIA  
 THROUGH : Administrative Officer, DCI  
 SUBJECT : Request for Reimbursement for Reception and Representation Expenses Incurred in the Conduct of Official Duties  
 REFERENCE : DCI Memo dtd Subject: Official Reception and Representation Expenses at Headquarters [REDACTED]

STATINTL

The officer named below (Host) incurred expenses on the date indicated in an official capacity. It is requested that the charges be reimbursed.

<u>DATE</u>	:		
<u>HOST</u>	:		
<u>GUEST(S)</u>	:	<u>NAME</u>	<u>ORGANIZATION</u>

<u>AGENCY PARTICIPANTS</u>	:	<u>NAME</u>	<u>COMPONENT</u>
----------------------------	---	-------------	------------------

REIMBURSABLE CHARGES:  
 (Receipts Attached)

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Check One:

☐

I certify that the payment of the charges cited herein are allowable under the standards established by referent memorandum.

☐

I certify that prior approval was obtained from the Director for an exception to the provisions of the referent memorandum.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Deputy Director  
 or Head of Independent Office

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STATINTL

Approved For Release 2001/11/20 : CIA-RDP80-00473A000800010028-7

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U.S. CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION  
FEDERAL EXECUTIVE INSTITUTE

ROUTE 29 NORTH  
CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA 22903

December 20, 1976

DD/A Registry  
File *Training*

*13 JAN 1977*  
*leg*

Mr. John F. Blake  
Deputy Director for Administration  
Central Intelligence Agency  
Washington, D.C. 20505

Dear Jack:

Let me offer a final thank you for your contribution to the success of our Assistant Secretaries' program. We are hard at work on the editing process and will be sending you a copy of the monograph we plan to prepare.

Enclosed is a print of the picture taken of the participants after lunch on Thursday.

We look forward to your future involvements with FEI and believe the program already has been helpful in our dealing with the career executives.

Sincerely,

Thomas P. Murphy  
Director

Enclosure



THE PRESIDENT'S PROGRAM DIRECTORS: THE ASSISTANT SECRETARIES

December 8 and 9, 1976

Federal Executive Institute, Charlottesville, Virginia

LEFT

RIGHT

Ralph C. Bledsoe (Ralph)  
Professor, FEI

Laurin L. Henry (Laurin)  
Consultant, FEI - Professor, UVA

John F. Blake (Jack)  
Deputy Director for Administration, Central Intelligence Agency

J. Paul Bolduc (J. P.)  
Assistant Secretary for Administration, Department of Agriculture

Donald G. Brotzman (Don)  
Assistant Secretary of the Army (Manpower and Reserve Affairs)  
Department of the Army

Alvin L. Alm (Al)  
Assistant Administrator for Planning and Management  
Environmental Protection Agency

Thomas P. Murphy (Tom)  
Director, FEI

Charles J. Orlebeke (Chuck)  
Assistant Secretary for Policy Development and Research  
HUD

David R. Macdonald (Dave)  
Under Secretary of the Navy  
Department of the Navy

Paul G. Dembling (Paul)  
General Counsel  
General Accounting Office

Donald E. Nuechterlein (Don)  
Professor, FEI

Roger W. Hooker, Jr. (Roger)  
Assistant Secretary for Congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs  
Department of Transportation

Bradley H. Patterson, Jr. (Brad)  
Assistant Director for Operations  
Presidential Personnel Office  
The White House

Patrick J. Conklin (Pat)  
Associate Director for Institute Operations, FEI

Michael H. Moskow (Mike)  
Under Secretary of Labor  
Department of Labor

John B. Rhinelander (John)  
Under Secretary of HUD

John Richardson, Jr. (John)  
Assistant Secretary of State  
for Educational and Cultural Affairs, Department of State

Richard L. Feltner (Dick)  
Assistant Secretary for Marketing and Consumer Affairs  
Department of Agriculture

David Mosso (David)  
Fiscal Assistant Secretary  
Department of the Treasury

Fred G. Clark (Fred)  
Assistant Secretary for Administration and Management  
Department of Labor

Judith T. Connor (Judith)  
Assistant Secretary for Environment, Safety & Consumer Affairs, DOT

William H. Kolberg (Bill)  
Assistant Secretary for Employment and Training  
Department of Labor

NOT PICTURED:

Theodore Cooper (Ted)  
Assistant Secretary for Health  
HEW

William A. Morrill (Bill)  
Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, HEW

David P. Taylor (Dave)  
Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower & Reserve Affairs  
Department of Defense

Antonin Scalia (Nino)  
Assistant Attorney General  
Office of Legal Counsel  
Department of Justice

Robert P. Boynton (Bob)  
Professor of Government and Public Administration  
School of Government  
American University

John D. Young (Jack)  
Assistant Secretary (Comptroller)  
HEW

DDA 76-6226  
DD/A Registry

File

*Training*

15 December 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director of Central Intelligence  
Associate Deputy Director for Intelligence

FROM : John F. Blake  
Deputy Director for Administration

Gentlemen:

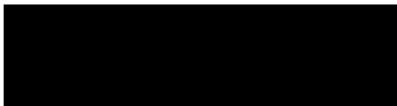
1. Your mutual friend, Don Nuechterlein of FEI, asked a favor of me when I was recently in Charlottesville.

2. He has recently completed the attached monograph on "National interests and foreign policy: A conceptual framework for analysis and decision-making". His query was whether I would be good enough to critique his article. With what I am sure you would both agree was an unusual display of modesty on my part, I noted my obvious lack of competence on the particular subject matter. I did mention to Don, however, who had spoken in very favorable terms concerning you two gentlemen, that both of you would have bona fides which would allow a constructive critique. He, therefore, asked that I request same of you. He did state that sometime in the future he hopes to use the monograph as a chapter in a book he has under consideration.

3. I leave it to you both if you would care to be accommodating to Don and, secondly, if you choose to feed-back through me or be in direct contact with him.

4. This will teach you both to go around impressing people.

STATINTL

  
John F. Blake

Att (as stated)

Distribution:

Orig - DDCI w/att  
1 - ADDI w/att  
1 - ER w/att

✓ 1 - DDA Subject w/att  
1 - DDA Chrono w/o att  
1 - JFB Chrono w/o att

DDA:JFBlake:der (15 Dec 1976)

## National interests and foreign policy: A conceptual framework for analysis and decision-making

DONALD E. NUECHTERLEIN

THE term "national interest" has been used by statesmen and scholars since the founding of nation-states to describe the aspirations and goals of sovereign entities in the international arena. Today foreign ministers, military strategists and academicians discuss the vital interests of their countries in ways suggesting that everyone understands precisely what they mean and will draw correct inferences from their use of the term. Nothing could be further from reality. In truth, the study of international politics as well as the art of diplomacy suffer from widespread ambiguity about the meaning of national interest, with the result that some scholars have proposed that the concept be abandoned and replaced by some other phrase. To my mind, this would be an abdication of the scholar's responsibility because, whether we like it or not, the term national interest is so deeply ingrained in the literature of international relations and diplomatic language that it is unlikely to be dismissed from our vocabulary simply because some scholars find it useless. Were we to attempt to substitute some new phrase, we would likely find even less consensus and could become engaged in yet another round of jargon-creation. A better alternative, I suggest, is to strive for a more precise definition of national interest and then provide a conceptual framework in which serious discussion of foreign policy and international politics can become more fruitful. That is the purpose of this paper.

What is attempted here has a three-fold objective: one, to set forth a conceptual framework in which the actions of nation-states may be more rigorously examined; two, to utilize the framework to analyse the reactions of three major powers to recent foreign policy crises; and three, to anticipate how the same powers are likely to view their national interests when they are obliged to deal with three probable future crises. One important qualification must be made at the outset: it is assumed that the leaders of all nation-states act rationally in the pursuit of state objectives, *i.e.* that states adopt policies which their leaders believe will advance the well-being of their societies, whatever the constitutional system. One is not asked to assess whether the actions of states are cost-effective, wise or moral under the circumstances in which they were made; it is assumed only that decisions are made with some degree of reasoning,

however wise or foolish they may be perceived by other states, or indeed by opposition groups within the state itself. It must also be assumed that political leaders of the state making decisions on war and peace are loyal to that state, *e.g.* that they operate on a set of values which puts the safety and economic well-being of their country at least as high as other states. Finally, the number of persons involved in making the determination of what is in the national interest will vary from state to state, depending on the type of government it has.

### *Definitions*

Most textbooks on international relations contain definitions of and some discussion on national interest. Several scholars have written an entire volume on the subject, among them Charles Beard, Hans Morgenthau, Joseph Frankel and this writer.<sup>1</sup> There is no accepted definition of national interest among scholars, and it seems appropriate here to suggest one which hopefully will stand up to the scrutiny of others. In its simplest form, *the national interest is the perceived needs and desires of one sovereign state in relation to other sovereign states comprising the external environment.* Several points in this definition need elaboration: first, we are talking about the *perception* of state needs, which suggests that decisions about what is in the national interest are the result of a political process in which a country's leaders may hold different views on what that interest is, but ultimately come to a conclusion about the importance of a specific issue. Secondly, this definition deals with fully independent *sovereign* states, not with international organizations or dependent territories because, for better or worse, we still live in a world where decisions to use force, to impose trade restrictions, to enter alliances are made only by the governments of sovereign states. Thirdly, this definition draws a distinction between the external and the internal (domestic) environment of the state; the latter is usually referred to as the *public interest*.<sup>2</sup> Finally, this definition implies that we are talking about the interests of the nation-state in its entirety, not of private groups, bureaucracies or political organizations.

This brief definition of national interest does not, however, provide the scholar or decision-maker with any guidelines to help in identifying these interests. To do this, it is useful to divide the national interest of a country into four basic needs, or requirements, which form the underpinnings of

1. See Charles A. Beard, *The Idea of National Interest* (New York, 1934); Hans J. Morgenthau, *In Defense of the National Interest* (New York, 1951); Joseph Frankel, *National Interest* (London, 1970); Donald E. Nuechterlein, *United States National Interests in a Changing World* (Lexington, Ky.), 1973.

2. This does not mean to imply that the two spheres do not overlap considerably, as in the impact on the domestic economies of western Europe and the United States when the Arab oil countries imposed an oil embargo in 1973. It does suggest, however, that there is utility in thinking of *national* interests as the way in which a sovereign state interacts with its external environment, whereas the *public* interest is the way in which the sovereign state deals with its internal environment.

its foreign policies. These *basic national interests* may be described as follows<sup>1</sup>:

- (i) *Defence* interests: the protection of the nation-state and its citizens against the threat of physical violence directed from another state, and/or an externally inspired threat to its system of government.
- (ii) *Economic* interests: the enhancement of the nation-state's economic well-being in relations with other states.
- (iii) *World Order* interests: the maintenance of an international political and economic system in which the nation-state may feel secure, and in which its citizens and commerce may operate peacefully outside its borders.
- (iv) *Ideological* interests: the protection and furtherance of a set of values which the people of a nation-state share and believe to be universally good.<sup>2</sup>

It is obvious that these needs and desires are not mutually exclusive and that there must be compromises and trade-offs among them; but if one conceives of the national interest of a state, particularly a major power, as consisting of several kinds of interest competing for attention and resources, we may be able better to look at the decision-making processes of these states and determine more accurately why their leaders make the decisions they do.

#### *Intensities of interest*

In addition to identifying these four basic, underlying interests pursued by major sovereign states, it is essential to determine as accurately as possible the intensity of feeling their leaders have in specific international issues. For example, the government of a country may be concerned about events in another country; but the intensity of its concern will depend on a multitude of factors, among them: distance from its own borders, composition of the government in question, amount of trade carried on, historical relationships between the countries, etc. Thus, the degree to which policy makers become alarmed about events in another country results from a process of thinking through the values and potential costs

1. The order in which these four basic interests appear does not suggest any priority of one over another, although it might be argued that, unless a nation-state has the capability of defending its territory and citizens (either through a strong military force or alliance with a major power), none of the other three basic interests is likely to matter much. Czechoslovakia in 1938 is an example. Ideology for some states may be more important than either economic advancement or a stable world order.

2. As used here, ideological interest refers to the values which a nation-state believes to be important. Obviously, states differ widely regarding the values they feel are important and the extent to which they are willing to defend or compromise them. In its extreme form, ideology can be fascism, Leninism or a Spanish Inquisition. It should also be noted that this discussion does not concern moral or immoral *behavior* of states – only the degree to which values affect perceptions of interest. Too often a state may think it is operating on the basis of high moral standards while other states are convinced it is acting in an arrogant or deceitful manner.

involved and, ultimately, of reaching some decision about the level of concern which the state should express. This process implies trade-offs among the four basic interests outlined above. For example, a change in government through a *coup d'etat* may be distasteful to another state for both ideological and world order reasons; but if there are important economic ties with that country and no threat to one's own territory, the tendency will be to subordinate ideological concerns and potential security problems to economic considerations. In the case of capitalist states, this trade-off is often made; in the case of communist and socialist states, ideological factors are likely to play a more important role in determining the trade-off.

To better analyse this process of determining the intensity of interest, another set of definitions is useful:

(i) *Survival* issues: when the very existence of a nation-state is in jeopardy, as a result of overt military attack on its own territory, or from the threat of attack if an enemy's demands are rejected. Hitler's ultimatums in the late 1930s are examples. The key to whether an issue is survival or not, in this differentiation, is that it must be an immediate, credible threat of massive physical harm by one nation-state on another. By this definition, there probably are no economic, world order, or ideological issues which qualify; only *defence* interests, as defined above, would reach this level of intensity. The distinction becomes more meaningful if the use of strategic nuclear weapons is factored into the equation: what is argued here is that *only* if the issue is at the survival level, *i.e.* that the very existence of the state is in jeopardy, would a government be justified on any rational ground in using large nuclear weapons against an enemy. The Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962 demonstrated this point.<sup>1</sup>

(ii) *Vital* issues: where serious harm will very likely result to the state unless strong measures, including the use of conventional military forces, are employed to counter an adverse action by another state, or to deter it from undertaking a serious provocation. A vital issue may, in the long run, be as serious a threat to a country's political and economic well-being as a survival issue; but time is the essential difference, and a vital issue usually provides a state with sufficient time to seek help from allies, bargain with the antagonist about a solution to the dispute, or take aggressive counter-measures to warn the enemy that it will pay a high price if the political, economic or military pressure is not withdrawn. Unlike survival issues, a vital matter may involve not only defence issues, but also economic, world order (alliance and national prestige) and in some cases ideological issues. For example, when the United States in 1971 imposed a 10 per cent surcharge on all imports in order to force its trading partners to accept a devaluation of the dollar, it signalled that its growing

1. If we say survival entails an immediate and credible threat to the very existence of a country and its form of government, then no economic, world order or ideological issue would qualify because they could not be similarly threatened individually. Only national defence entails immediate destruction.

balance of payments difficulties had reached the vital level. Similarly, when the Soviet Union intervened in Czechoslovakia in 1968 to put down the Dubcek regime, it had reached the point where its ideological and world order interests were vitally affected and strong measures were needed to cope with the problem.

(iii) *Major* issues: where the political, economic and ideological well-being of the state may be adversely affected by events and trends in the international environment and thus requires corrective action in order to prevent them from becoming serious threats (vital issues). Most issues in international relations fall into this category and usually are resolved through diplomatic negotiations. It is when diplomatic talks fail to resolve such disputes that they can become dangerous. Governments must then decide how deeply their interests are affected by the event or trends in question; if in the final analysis a government is unwilling or unable to compromise on what it considers to be a fundamental question, it has implicitly ascertained that the issue is a vital one. On the other hand, if compromise is a possible course of action, then the issue probably is a major one. Most economic problems between states are major, not vital issues; the same is true of ideological issues, although states sometimes cloak other issues in ideological garb in an effort to mobilize public opinion at home and abroad. World order issues are different, however, because these usually affect a country's feeling of security and are more difficult to compromise. Germany and France between the world wars found it difficult to compromise on many issues because of their deep feelings of insecurity. U.S.-Soviet relations in the 1950s and 1960s suffered from similar suspicions of one another's intentions, which made compromise on issues involving arms limitations impossible.

(iv) *Peripheral* issues: where the well-being of the state is not adversely affected by events or trends abroad, but where the interests of private citizens and companies operating in other countries might be endangered. Obviously, the large and powerful multi-national corporations usually are given a higher priority by the parent nation-state because their earnings and their taxes have a significant effect on the economic well-being of those states. When a major oil company's assets are nationalized, for example by Peru and Libya, this is treated as a major issue by the parent state, particularly if inadequate compensation is paid for the property. Each nation-state sets its own priority on how greatly it values commercial enterprises operating abroad: for some states, these constitute major issues of national interest, but for others they are only of peripheral interest. Some economic issues that formerly were considered *vital* are no longer so: the willingness of the oil importing countries to accept the oil exporting nations' huge price increases in 1973, as well as their acquiescence in the nationalization of major oil companies, was a clear signal that these were no longer vital issues, but major ones which could be negotiated.



One way of analysing the intensity of national interests is to select a country and an important foreign policy crisis it faced in the past and assess its actions in the following way:

FIGURE A

Country X		Issue Y		
<i>Basic interest involved</i>	<i>Survival</i>	<i>Intensity of interest</i>		
		<i>Vital</i>	<i>Major</i>	<i>Peripheral</i>
Defence				
Economic				
World order				
Ideological				

An example to illustrate the matrix is the Suez Crisis of 1956, when the Eden Government in Britain decided to use force against Nasser because of his abrupt nationalization of the canal. An analysis of British policy decisions during this crisis might come to the following conclusions: the Eden Government decided that Britain's economic interests were so endangered by the potential closure of the canal that it could not compromise with Nasser on this issue. Therefore, the intensity of British interest was perceived by the Eden Government to be a *vital economic* one, and it had to be met with force because Colonel Nasser refused to negotiate suitable guarantees on use of the canal. But other interests of Britain were also involved: Nasser was seen as a threat to western-oriented governments in the Middle East (World Order interest) and he was clearly moving his country into a close relationship with the Soviet Union as well as following an anti-democratic course at home (Ideological interest). Thus, world order and ideological interests, although not at the same level of intensity as the economic interest, were also important, and Eden therefore decided against compromise with Nasser and for the use of force to deal with the issue. We may therefore postulate the following about how Britain viewed its interests in October 1956, and from this conclude that force was likely to be used by Eden:

FIGURE B

Country: Britain		Issue: Suez Canal 1956		
<i>Basic interest involved</i>	<i>Survival</i>	<i>Intensity of interest</i>		
		<i>Vital</i>	<i>Major</i>	<i>Peripheral</i>
Defence				X
Economic		X		
World order			X	
Ideological			X	



One can also use this framework to analyse Soviet actions in the spring of 1972 when the U.S. government decided to mine Haiphong Harbour in North Vietnam, in order to bring pressure on Hanoi to negotiate a satisfactory end to the war. Many American observers viewed this as a serious provocation of the Soviet Union, which had supplied Hanoi with large quantities of war materials by sea and given it strong political support throughout the struggle against Saigon and U.S. forces. The Nixon Administration calculated that Moscow's interest was not so large that it would risk war with the United States *if* the provocation was limited, which spreading mines in a harbour was presumed to be. If we use the matrix to assess how Moscow viewed its own interests, we might conclude that it did not have any vital interest at stake so long as the North Vietnamese regime was not threatened. Therefore, it was not likely to use force against the United States.

FIGURE C

Country: U.S.S.R.

Issue: Mining Haiphong Harbour, 1972

Basic interest involved	Survival	Intensity of interest		
		Vital	Major	Peripheral
Defence				X
Economic			X	
World order			X	
Ideological			X	

In some ways, the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962 was similar to the Haiphong Harbour mining because it involved a contest between the super-powers, in which each had to assess carefully the intensity of its own interest as well as that of its antagonist because there was some risk of nuclear war. Judging by the outcome, and the facts now available concerning the decision-making process, it is apparent that both the United States and the Soviet Union thought they had vital interests at stake, although different ones; in the end, Moscow was more willing to compromise than was Washington and was perceived by the world to be the loser in that contest. The perceived interests of the two super-powers may be described as follows:

FIGURE D

Country: United States - X  
U.S.S.R. - Y

Issue: Cuban missile crisis 1962

Basic interest involved	Survival	Intensity of interest		
		Vital	Major	Peripheral
Defence		X	Y	
Economic			X	Y
World order		X	Y	
Ideological		Y	X	

The key point here is that it is the *comparison* of intensities of interests of the parties to a crisis which is at the heart of this analysis; for if this process of working through the comparative intensities of national interests is done in a coldly dispassionate manner, it is my view that fewer miscalculations about an antagonist's intentions and reactions to crises will result. However, it is also essential to keep in mind that there is no magic formula, or foolproof system, which will guarantee correct assessment in advance of a crisis: what is suggested here is a more rigorous method of analysis, not a scientific formula for measuring inputs and outputs. The decision-making process in foreign policy remains an art, not a science, in this writer's view; the intensity of national interest is a dynamic process which is constantly affected by different variables. The task of the scholar, and the policy-maker, is to employ the most precise tools of analysis possible in order to produce the most reasonable judgments of given circumstances. The emphasis is, therefore, on the process of examination. If the conclusions prove to be correct and mistakes in judgment are fewer, then the methodology has served its purpose.

*Deciding which interests are vital*

A correct estimate of how a nation-state facing a potentially dangerous situation will act to protect itself hinges, in the final analysis, on how well the political leadership calculates the interests of its country and the intensity of interest perceived by the country's antagonists. Therefore, what are the criteria that should be used to measure the vital interests of all major parties involved in a crisis?

It is obvious that nation-states have certain values which the people of the state share in some important measure. Language is the most common one, but history and culture are also bonds holding peoples together in states. The task of the scholar, and the policy-maker, is to assess which of these values are important in formulating the state's national interests, and the extent to which they condition foreign policy decisions made by political leaders. Listed below are eight *value* factors which influence the thinking of government leaders when they think about events and problems beyond their own borders:

(i) *Proximity of the danger*

This factor applies primarily to defence and world order interests, more than to economic and ideological interests. A nation's feeling of security has traditionally had much to do with the distance of the threat from its own borders. The age of the long-range bomber and the intercontinental missile have reduced the importance of this factor; but in terms of public attitudes, there is still more interest in developments in a neighbouring country than in a country far distant. In the 1960s for example, the American people were deeply disturbed by Castro's turning Cuba into a Communist state, but little concerned about similar events in Laos.

(ii) *Nature of the threat*

For a western country, a distinction usually is drawn between an overt act of aggression, as Korea in 1950, and internal wars such as Vietnam and Angola, even though the latter were supported from the outside. Communist countries probably do not make such a distinction because both are seen in class warfare or anti-imperialist terms. Nevertheless, major powers weigh their own national interests to a large extent in terms of the level of the conflict and the dangers it poses to interests elsewhere. In 1975, for example, the United States did not intervene in Angola largely because this was viewed by the Congress as an internal struggle among the Angolans. Yet, few voices in Congress criticized President Ford when he warned Cuba early in 1976 that if Cuban troops were used elsewhere in Africa the United States would take action.

(iii) *Economic stake*

Clearly a nation's commerce and investment in another country condition its view of its interests; and this often leads to trade-offs among basic interests, as Britain found in its view toward Rhodesia and South Africa. This factor probably is less important today than it was a generation ago, when nations were more willing to take strong measures to protect investments abroad. It is also doubtful that Communist states place as much emphasis on economic factors in determining their national interests.

(iv) *Sentimental attachment*

This factor affects countries like the United States, Canada and Australia more than others because of their large immigrant populations. The influential Greek minority in the United States exerted decisive influence on American policy toward Turkey in 1975 because of its strong attachment for the Greek Cypriots uprooted by the Turkish Army in Cyprus. American Jewry exerts an enormous influence on U.S. policy in the Middle East. The fact that Canadian and Australian forces joined with the British upon the outbreak of World War II stemmed from the strong sentimental attachment to Britain, not because either country was directly threatened in 1939.

(v) *Type of government*

This factor forms part of a nation's ideological interest and probably is more important for communist and socialist states than for democratic regimes which emphasize individual rights. The reason is that the latter have too often compromised their ideology by supporting authoritarian governments, whereas communist states consistently emphasize the solidarity of all socialist countries. The United States in the post-World War II period was guilty of considerable hypocrisy on this point because its rhetoric supporting freedom and democracy was not matched by denial of aid to a number of military dictatorships around the world.

(vi) *Effect on balance of power*

This factor is little understood by the mass population in most countries, but it is one of the most important value factors for the policy-maker. It has to do with world order interests primarily because of concerns over security; but it may also affect economic and defence interests. No great power can afford to ignore what happens to smaller countries in various parts of the world because the psychological effects of governments changing political allegiances affects the world power balance. Chile is a case in point: the elevation of Allende to the premiership signalled to all of Latin America that Chile had moved away from the American sphere of influence and wanted closer relations with the Soviet sphere, even though it was not a Soviet satellite. It was a considerable gain for the Soviet side of the international contest for influence, and a loss for the United States. Since the accession to power of the military in Chile, neither the Soviets nor the United States claims solidarity with that hapless country. Egypt's abandoning co-operation with the Soviet Union and South Vietnam's removal from the United States sphere in the mid-1970s were other instances of balance of power factors affecting the national interests of nation-states.

(vii) *National prestige*

This factor is more important for some states than for others, but all major and super-powers value it in some degree. In a word, it is the degree to which a state cares how other states view it, *i.e.* whether it is perceived as being trustworthy, realistic in pursuit of goals, maintaining political support at home, etc. States which pursue unrealistic or contradictory policies soon lose credibility, or prestige, with other states, both friends and antagonists. Success is an important part of prestige. That is why British prestige dropped over the Suez issue in 1956, and why Soviet prestige dropped after the Cuba Missile Crisis. The United States decline in credibility also suffered after the fall of Vietnam in 1975. In each case, the power was humiliated because it could not achieve a goal on which it has staked its prestige.

(viii) *Attitude of allies and friends*

Few nation-states today can afford to ignore the views of other states, particularly allies, in the pursuit of their national interests. This is particularly true of democratic states possessing open societies because a free press and public forums make it probable that leaders will be influenced by opinions of friendly governments. This was clearly true of the United States during the Truman and Eisenhower administrations: both presidents valued the views of their European allies whenever crisis situations arose. The European Community clearly binds the nine members together in closer association than before and causes each to pay far greater attention to the views of its partners than would have been

thinkable a generation ago. Even the Soviet Union consults with its eastern European allies before taking important economic or political decisions affecting them, even though its military power in eastern Europe might suggest that this is unnecessary.

Values are only one part of the process of assessing whether an interest is vital, however. This is because a decision that something is vital implies that it should not be compromised and that a likely outcome of the dispute might entail the use of armed forces. Therefore, when determining whether a vital interest is at stake, policy-makers and political leaders must also calculate the potential costs of refusing to compromise on an important issue and running the risk of war. Listed below are eight *cost* factors which leaders usually take into account:

(i) *Economic costs of conflict*

If an economic or world order issue is so important that hostilities might result, such hostilities can take several forms, including trade embargoes, economic sanctions and limited armed intervention. In all such instances, there will be economic costs to the state taking such measures. When the United States imposed a trade embargo on Cuba, this affected the commerce of American business and shut off the supply of Cuban sugar to U.S. markets. When Britain decided to use force against Nasser in 1956, this action had financial consequences for sterling, and affected British shipping interests. The great economic costs of American intervention in Vietnam were only dimly apparent in 1965 when the intervention began. The probable costs of intervention, or embargoes on trade, need to be carefully calculated in advance and weighed against the value factors cited above.

(ii) *The number of troops needed*

If armed intervention is considered a likely consequence of 'no compromise' on a vital issue, policy-makers should be reasonably clear about what the manpower needs for a limited war are likely to be, the likely level of hostilities and the probable casualties. In advising the President what the manpower needs would be for armed intervention in Vietnam, the Secretary of Defence grossly underestimated the size of the force needed to contain North Vietnamese-sponsored warfare in South Vietnam. Conversely, when the Soviets intervened to put down the Hungarian Freedom Fighters in 1956, they used a massive amount of force and ended the insurrection in a short period of time. The size of the force used and the potential casualties are important factors for a free society to assess correctly because they are crucial in calculating public reaction to an intervention. The U.S. intervention in the Dominican Republic in 1965 did not result in widespread opposition in the United States, in large part because the force employed was modest and casualties were small.

(iii) *The probable duration of hostilities*

This factor is closely tied to (ii) because the longer the conflict, the larger the casualties and the greater the need to enlarge the force. It is probably universally true that a nation believing it can accomplish its objectives through the limited use of force for a short period of time is more likely to undertake such action than if it knows in advance that the war will be long and costly. This is true of totalitarian regimes as well as democratic ones. In this writer's view, the United States would not have intervened in Vietnam in 1965 had it calculated that the war could not be ended in one year.

(iv) *The risks of enlarged conflict*

This point is always considered when limited military force is contemplated, but it is not always correctly calculated. In large measure, it is a matter of good intelligence - to clearly understand the concerns and intentions of *all* nation-states affected by a planned intervention. The miscalculations flowing from misperceptions of intentions by other states have too often resulted in unwanted and costly wars. If Stalin had known in 1950 that Truman would intervene to repel an attack on South Korea, would he have given his blessing to North Korea's plan to unify the country by force? Conversely, had Truman known that China would intervene in that war if American forces were permitted to move to the Yalu River, would he have given General MacArthur the authority to take his forces north? Again, it is probably a general case that if national leaders knew in advance that limited interventions would result in greatly enlarged conflicts, there would be far fewer such interventions.

(v) *The likelihood of success*

This factor is closely linked to the previous considerations but adds one element: even if the issue is deemed to be so important that it cannot be compromised and is, therefore thought to be vital, will the limited use of conventional force succeed in bringing about the desired result? This is an extremely difficult question because, on the one hand, the value attached to the issue may be very high, but the potential level of warfare may also be high - raising the question whether the objective is important enough to risk the use of tactical nuclear weapons. It is clear that if the basic interest involved is "defence of homeland", the likelihood of taking that risk is higher than would be the case of defending a country far removed from the homeland (world order interest). When China intervened in Korea in 1950, President Truman publicly speculated about using the atomic bomb to halt the Chinese drive, but was persuaded both by his European allies and domestic opinion that this would not be a wise move. Thus, the conventional Korean conflict then continued for three more years. The record shows that the Soviet Union threatened Britain and France with a large war in November 1956 only after it was sure that the United States would not support its allies in their invasion of Egypt.

(vi) *The reaction of domestic opinion*

An open democratic society must always calculate this cost, and it is probably a general rule that public opinion supports limited wars when they commence but loses patience when they are not brought to a speedy conclusion. Although public opinion does not generally operate as a brake in communist or other totalitarian states, the leadership of a communist government must take into account the views of the party members even though the party is far more tightly controlled than in freely elected representative governments.

(vii) *World reaction*

Condemnation by other states, particularly if the issue is taken to the United Nations, is a cost that must be calculated by decision-makers when contemplating whether an issue is worth fighting for. Major and super-powers often ignore international opinion when the issue is a vital one, as Czechoslovakia was to the U.S.S.R. in 1968, Tibet was to China in 1958 and East Pakistan was to India in 1971. However, in such cases, the state doing the intervening gives greater attention on the value scale to the attitude of allies and friends. There is usually a trade-off here. For lesser powers, the attitude of the United Nations and world opinion might have a greater influence on their decisions.

(viii) *The impact on internal politics*

In a western democratic system, the party in power always takes into account the political price that will have to be paid if an armed intervention turns out to be politically unpopular. Political leaders usually try to obtain non-partisanship support for decisions involving the use of forces in order to share responsibility for the costs. Truman and Eisenhower were especially diligent in seeking support from their Congressional opposition parties. This is not always true, however; Eden did not consult his opposition before launching the Suez expedition, and Lyndon Johnson did not get a vote of support from Congress for his massive intervention in Vietnam. Both left office in humiliation. In the Soviet Union, China and other totalitarian states, the leadership also struggles to convince the opposition of the rightness of its policy; but in these systems the number of leaders participating is far smaller than in a western system. If the leadership in a Communist state pursues a course that turns out to be disastrous, it is likely to be replaced, as Khrushchev was after his debacle in Cuba in 1962, and as Brezhnev might have been had the intervention in Czechoslovakia in 1968 proved disastrous. Leadership in any system has to contend with its opposition in matters which involve the use of the armed forces abroad, and the risks are higher when a leader has limited political support than when he enjoys broad political support.

This analysis of the values and costs which political leaders of nation-states should, and usually do, take into account when deciding whether



an international issue is of *vital* importance to their national interests can also be employed to determine the difference between a major interest and a peripheral interest, and also between a vital and a survival interest. However, the measures used to deal with a problem would change; for example, if the issue is how to respond to a protective tariff imposed by a major trading nation, there is no likelihood that force would be contemplated; but strong economic countermeasures could be taken if the intensity of interest is perceived as major, or a mild protest would be made if the intensity of interest is peripheral. Similarly, if the issue is borderline between vital and survival, as the Cuban Missile Crisis was for the U.S. government in 1962, then the question is whether to use nuclear weapons if all other measures fail to bring about the desired result. For purposes of this discussion, however, it is more fruitful to deal with the question of vital interests because most international crises during the past twenty-five years have been in this category and have resulted in the greatest number of mistakes in judgment by national leaders. This discussion is focused, therefore, on analysing the question: "How can decisions about a nation-state's vital interests be more accurately assessed, in order that fewer mistakes are made?"

#### *Utilization of the framework in future crises*

The examples used above to illustrate how this conceptual framework may be utilized in analysing the intensity of a nation-state's interests are taken from past crises where considerable documentation is available. The real challenge, however, is to anticipate future crises among major powers, and I suggest that this framework can also be utilized for this purpose. Military planners have used war-gaming techniques for many years, and a number of scholars have developed crisis-management models to help students of international politics and policy-makers understand the decisions of national leaders in crisis situations. The purpose of this framework is to step back slightly from the point of decision-making and analyse the basic values which condition the attitudes of government leaders *before* they are faced with a crisis. In other words, what are the perceived values which undergird the national interests of states, and how does a given society look at potential costs in relation to these values?

To answer these questions adequately requires a detailed examination of the culture and psychology of the nation-states involved in international crises and is a proper function of scholarship. For example, to what extent is it true that totalitarian states place less emphasis on the expenditure of human life (casualties) than do democratic societies when engaged in warfare? Evidence from the Korean War seems to indicate that China had little regard for human life when it sent waves of its troops to certain death in its offensives in 1951 and 1952. Conversely, American casualties in Korea and later in Vietnam were far less, but they caused severe repercussions on political leaders and military commanders.



Similarly, the record seems to show that U.S. policy-makers during the past thirty years have been willing to take more risks of intervention outside their immediate regions than has the Soviet Union. To what extent has this been a result of better capabilities for doing so, or of different sets of values? This type of question requires a broader study than is possible here; but it should be possible to make some tentative assumptions in order to assess how different national leaderships view their own national interests, in terms of the framework set out above.

In order to illustrate how the framework might be used to assess future crises, we can take three potential crises which would involve the major, and perhaps vital, interests of three major powers today: the United States, Soviet Union and Great Britain. The three future crises contemplated are: one, the outbreak of serious fighting between Panamanian and American forces in the Panama Canal Zone, with Cuba providing active support to the Panamanians; two, the outbreak of warfare in the Republic of South Africa, with the Soviet Union and Cuba providing active support to black nationalists; three, civil war in Yugoslavia, following Marshal Tito's death, with the Warsaw Pact (led by the U.S.S.R.) and NATO (led by the United States) providing support to different sides. How would the national interests of the three powers be perceived in these crises, and what policy decisions would be likely to flow from their leaders' perception of these interests?

In the first case - Panama - it is clear that the United States would view the outbreak of large-scale violence there as affecting its historical and vital sphere of influence and would react strongly to any attempt of another great power to interfere. But what national interests would be perceived by the Soviet Union and Britain, both of which have some interests in the Caribbean area? Analysts may differ in their appraisal of this situation, and the following estimate is suggested as one scholar's view, based on his knowledge of the three powers involved:

FIGURE E

X - United States  
Y - Soviet Union  
Z - Great Britain

Issue: *Warfare in Panama*

<i>Basic interest involved</i>	<i>Survival</i>	<i>Intensity of interest</i>		<i>Peripheral</i>
		<i>Vital</i>	<i>Major</i>	
Defence		X		Y Z
Economic			X Z	Y
World order		X	Y Z	
Ideological		Y	X	Z

In this appraisal, Panama is clearly a vital defence and a vital world interest of the United States, but *not* of either the Soviets or the British, whose interests are judged to be major or peripheral. The one exception could

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be a vital ideological interest of the Soviet Union in supporting the Cubans if their involvement in a Panamanian struggle should bring on the threat of American retaliation against Cuba itself. The Soviets might well give political support to the Panamanians, but it would not be in their interest to cause a confrontation with the United States because of Panama – any more than it was in the U.S. interest to have a confrontation with Moscow over the Czechoslovakia issue in 1968. The conclusion that could be drawn from this limited analysis of the Panama situation is that the United States would not be seriously opposed by either of the other powers in dealing with the crisis. However, there may well be a high political cost to pay for a large American intervention there, as the Soviets found in 1968.

In the second future crisis situation – South Africa – the scenario involves a black African war of attrition against the Republic of South Africa, to force it to grant independence to Namibia and to end apartheid. Cuban troops stationed in Angola would be used in support of Angolan forces and other southern African insurgents, in a drive to 'liberate' Namibia and force political changes in South Africa. Again, one scholar's analysis of how the three powers would view their national interests is as follows:

FIGURE F

Issue: *War in South Africa*

<i>Basic interest involved</i>	<i>Survival</i>	<i>Intensity of interest</i>		<i>Peripheral</i>
		<i>Vital</i>	<i>Major</i>	
Defence				X Y Z
Economic			X Z	Y
World order		Z	X Y	
Ideological			X Y Z	

This estimate of national interests suggests that neither the United States nor the Soviet Union has a vital interest in southern Africa, but that Britain may have a vital world order interest there because of the implications of this conflict for the future security of South Africa, which has large British investments, a large English-speaking population and historical political ties with Britain. Thus, it is reasonable to assume that Britain would take the lead in supporting South Africa to put down an attack while seeking a compromise solution on the diplomatic front. Britain would, of course, want support from the United States and the European Community for its effort, knowing that the Cubans and Black Africans would have Soviet Union support. It is not likely that this crisis would involve intervention by the Soviet Union or the United States, however, although both have major world order interests there.

In the final scenario – Yugoslavia – Marshal Tito has died, Moscow-oriented communists are making a serious bid for power and are being

supplied with arms from the Soviet Union and other eastern European states. These forces are opposed by the Yugoslav government, made up of moderate national communists, socialists and other groups determined to prevent Yugoslavia from being dominated by Moscow. Various national groups within the state may be working for independence (Croatia, for example). The moderate forces appeal to NATO and other countries for arms and take an anti-Soviet stance. In this situation, what would be the interests of Britain, the United States and the Soviet Union? One appraisal is the following:

FIGURE G

Issue: *Civil war in Yugoslavia*

Basic interest involved	Survival	Intensity of interest		
		Vital	Major	Peripheral
Defence			Y	X Z
Economic			Y	X Z
World order		Y	X Z	
Ideological		Y	X Z	

The conclusion suggested here is that only the Soviet Union has a vital interest in Yugoslavia, and that this interest stems from its fear that if Yugoslavia moves further away from Moscow's brand of communism – particularly if the moderate government moves toward closer co-operation with the European Common Market countries on economic matters, other eastern European countries would also try it. The precedent of Czechoslovakia in 1968 is a real one. If this assessment is correct, the Soviet Union could be expected to provide arms to the dissident forces and to launch a strong political campaign against the Belgrade government. If Soviet forces intervened directly, this would pose a serious crisis for NATO – particularly if it involved the Soviet Navy in the Adriatic near Italian territory. In this case, the strategic threat might edge the U.S. world order interest closer to *vital* and thus increase the likelihood of a super-power confrontation. In the absence of Soviet forces being used, however, the West probably would not intervene to save the moderate forces if they were losing the struggle.

### *Conclusions*

The purpose of presenting the above scenarios in such sketchy fashion is not to provide definitive answers to how the three powers would react in these crisis situations, but rather to illustrate how a conceptual framework such as this may be used to assess the values and costs perceived by the leaders of several nation-states with important interests in several crisis points in the world. Obviously, other students of international politics and various policy-makers will have their own views on where the checks

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should be placed on the matrixes shown above; and to do this analysis properly, the scenarios should be given in greater detail. A group of students or specialists should then be asked to work through individually the value questions and the cost factors for each of the three countries (and perhaps additional countries), and their final scores should be compared to see where the convergencies and divergencies lie. What is sought is consensus among the participants in the exercise as to what the national interests are, *not* predictions of actions that might be taken by the countries involved. It is the view of this writer that prediction of a nation-state's probable course of action is the proper role of war-gaming, but that reaching consensus on the importance of an issue is the proper role of the specialist in national interest assessment. The difference probably lies in the role of the military planner as compared with the task of the intelligence specialist.

My conclusion is that policy decisions of what to do about crises must rest on far more rigorous examination of how nation-states view their vital interests, and on far greater appreciation by policy-makers of the political, social, psychological and cultural factors which cause the leaders of other nation-states to view the world differently than they do. Ultimately, political leaders must decide whether an interest is so important that the risks of war must be taken to defend it; but such risks must be based on greater clarity than has often been the case in assessing the basis on which an antagonist also takes risks. This is the role of the scholar, the intelligence specialist on foreign countries, the dispassionate journalist – those who do not let feelings of one's own country's interests blur their perception of why another nation-state views the world differently and will react differently. This elaboration of the concept of national interest will, I believe, facilitate the process of foreign policy analysis, and may even result in more realistic judgments being made by policy-makers about ends and means in formulating foreign policies.

#### *Author's Note*

In May 1976 the framework outlined in this paper was successfully tried out on a group of students from the University College of Wales during a three-day crisis game conducted at the conference centre, Gregynog Hall, near Newtown in Wales. These forty students from Aberystwyth and Swansea were engaged in a crisis exercise concerned with the Middle East, and the group was divided into fourteen teams representing thirteen countries plus the P.L.O., either located in or having important interests in that region. Before the game started, but after the teams had read packets of background material on their countries, the team leaders were provided with a brief explanation on the national interest and were asked to evaluate their countries' interests in terms of a conceptual framework. Students were provided (Table 1) with a brief outline of definitions used in this paper as well as a listing of the value and cost factors which might be used to determine whether an issue is vital or not. The second sheet (Table 2) contained the matrix used above, but with the difference that a number system

was substituted for the terms "Survival", "vital" etc. Team leaders were asked to consider how deeply their country's interest was affected by the crisis outlined to them before the game started, with a score of ten implying a survival of the country, and a score of one meaning very little concern. They were asked to choose four numbers on that scale - one for each of the four basic national interests - which most closely reflected their level of concern about their countries' interests in light of the crisis laid before them. The same questionnaire was given to team leaders again half-way through the game, and again at the conclusion. There were thus three sets of evaluations of national interests for thirteen countries, plus the P.L.O.

After completion of the game, the scores were tabulated and distributed a few days later to team leaders (Table 3). Countries were grouped into three categories: those which appeared from the scores to be "relatively secure", those which appeared to be "moderately insecure", and those whose scores showed them to be "very insecure". After reviewing the tabulation, team leaders were given an opportunity to comment and to ask questions of each other. Two main conclusions emerged from the scores and from the discussion: (1) number of country teams showed signs of greater insecurity as the game progressed; and (2) team leaders acknowledged that their moves during the game tended to be more responsible because they had been forced to assess the national interests of their countries before the game commenced. When asked to comment on whether the numbering system was more, or less, helpful in assessing the degree of interest than the four categories (survival, vital, major, peripheral) would have been, the consensus was that the 1-10 numbering provided greater flexibility in determining levels of intensity, but that the four terms would have simplified the choices. On the basis of this trial, the Department of International Politics at Aberystwyth decided to use the national interest exercise in future crisis games and to modify it in light of experience.

TABLE I

*Determination of the national interest*

The national interest is the perceived needs and desires of one sovereign state in relation to other sovereign states comprising the external environment.

The national interest may be divided into four basic needs or requirements which account for all of a country's foreign policies. These basic national interests are:

1. *Defence interests*: the protection of the nation-state against the threat of physical violence directed from another state, and/or an externally inspired threat to the political and economic system of government.
2. *Economic interests*: the enhancement of the nation-state's economic well-being in relations with other states.
3. *World order interests*: the maintenance of an international political and economic framework in which the nation-state may feel secure, and in which its citizens and commerce are protected abroad.
4. *Ideological interests*: the furtherance in the external environment of a set of values which the nation-state believes to be universally good.

The criteria for assessing the importance of interests to a country include:

TABLE I (contd.)

Values	Costs
1. Distance from home country	1. Economic costs of conflict
2. Nature of the problem	2. Number of troops needed and potential casualties
3. Economic stake in area	3. Probable duration of hostilities
4. Sentimental attachment	4. Risks of enlarged conflict
5. Type of government	5. Likelihood of success
6. Effect on balance of power	6. Reaction of domestic public opinion
7. National prestige involved	7. World reaction (United Nations)
8. Attitudes of allies and friends	8. Impact on political life

TABLE 2

*Gregynog crisis game* Country:  
3-5 May 1976

*National interests and foreign policy decision-making*  
Issue: Middle East crisis - 1976

Basic national interests affected	Importance of the interest of your country									
Defence of the homeland	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Economic well-being of the nation	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Preservation of a favourable world order (regional balance of power)	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Enhancement of the nation's ideology abroad (values)	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

The team leader is asked to consult with his/her team after reading carefully the crisis scenario and reach a consensus before the game starts on how the issues affect the national interests of their country. Each team leader is requested to circle one number on each line to indicate the importance of the interest to his country. In the middle and at the end of the game you will be asked to complete another questionnaire to indicate how your perception of your country's national interests have been affected by the course of events during the crisis exercise.

TABLE 3

*Gregynog crisis game 3-5 May 1976**National interests and foreign policy decision-making: results of survey*

The results of the three surveys conducted at the crisis game are tabulated below.

<i>Degree of security/insecurity felt by country team</i>	<i>Before start of game</i>	<i>Mid-point</i>	<i>After completion of game</i>
A. <i>Relatively secure</i> (no score higher than 6)	France (3, 6, 6, 5)	France (3, 6, 5, 5)	France (3, 6, 5, 5)
	Saudi Arabia (2, 4, 3, 6)		Saudi Arabia (2, 4, 4, 6)
	U.S.S.R. (3, 4, 5, 5)		
	Jordan (6, 6, 5, 4)		
		Libya (5, 5, 6, 6)	
B. <i>Moderately insecure</i> (no score higher than one 8)	U.S.A. (6, 6, 7, 5)	U.S.A. (6, 5, 7, 4)	U.S.A. (6, 6, 7, 4)
	U.K. (3, 8, 7, 6)	U.K. (3, 7, 7, 2)	U.K. (2, 7, 6, 1)
	Iran (8, 7, 7, 5)	Iran (8, 7, 7, 5)	Iran (7, 8, 5, 5)
	Egypt (7, 6, 8, 3)	Egypt (7, 6, 8, 3)	Egypt (7, 6, 8, 3)
	Libya (7, 8, 6, 5)		Libya (6, 6, 7, 5)
	Iraq (7, 6, 7, 6)		
	Syria (8, 6, 7, 6)		
		Jordan (6, 7, 4, 3)	Jordan (8, 6, 4, 3)
		U.S.S.R. (4, 5, 7, 6)	U.S.S.R. (3, 5, 7, 6)
		Lebanon (6, 4, 8, 1)	Lebanon (7, 6, 7, 2)
		Saudi Arabia (3, 4, 6, 7)	
C. <i>Very insecure</i> (score of two 8s and above)	Israel (10, 8, 6, 4)	Israel (9, 8, 6, 4)	Israel (10, 8, 6, 4)
	P.L.O. (9, 7, 7, 6)	P.L.O. (8, 6, 7, 8)	P.L.O. (8, 6, 7, 8)
		Iraq (8, 8, 7, 6)	Iraq (8, 6, 9, 6)
		Syria (8, 6, 8, 6)	Syria (9, 6, 8, 5)
	Lebanon (8, 8, 6, 4)		

Scale: very insecure - 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 - completely secure.

15 December 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director of Central Intelligence  
Associate Deputy Director for Intelligence

FROM : John F. Blake  
Deputy Director for Administration

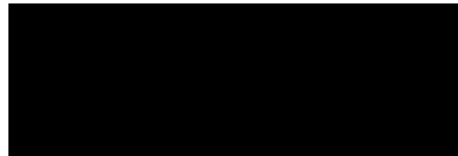
Gentlemen:

1. Your mutual friend, Don Nuechterlein of FBI, asked a favor of me when I was recently in Charlottesville.

2. He has recently completed the attached monograph on "National interests and foreign policy: A conceptual framework for analysis and decision-making". His query was whether I would be good enough to critique his article. With what I am sure you would both agree was an unusual display of modesty on my part, I noted my obvious lack of competence on the particular subject matter. I did mention to Don, however, who had spoken in very favorable terms concerning you two gentlemen, that both of you would have bona fides which would allow a constructive critique. He, therefore, asked that I request same of you. He did state that sometime in the future he hopes to use the monograph as a chapter in a book he has under consideration.

3. I leave it to you both if you would care to be accommodating to Don and, secondly, if you choose to feed-back through me or be in direct contact with him.

4. This will teach you both to go around impressing people.



John F. Blake

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## National interests and foreign policy: A conceptual framework for analysis and decision-making

DONALD E. NUECHTERLEIN

THE term "national interest" has been used by statesmen and scholars since the founding of nation-states to describe the aspirations and goals of sovereign entities in the international arena. Today foreign ministers, military strategists and academicians discuss the vital interests of their countries in ways suggesting that everyone understands precisely what they mean and will draw correct inferences from their use of the term. Nothing could be further from reality. In truth, the study of international politics as well as the art of diplomacy suffer from widespread ambiguity about the meaning of national interest, with the result that some scholars have proposed that the concept be abandoned and replaced by some other phrase. To my mind, this would be an abdication of the scholar's responsibility because, whether we like it or not, the term national interest is so deeply ingrained in the literature of international relations and diplomatic language that it is unlikely to be dismissed from our vocabulary simply because some scholars find it useless. Were we to attempt to substitute some new phrase, we would likely find even less consensus and could become engaged in yet another round of jargon-creation. A better alternative, I suggest, is to strive for a more precise definition of national interest and then provide a conceptual framework in which serious discussion of foreign policy and international politics can become more fruitful. That is the purpose of this paper.

What is attempted here has a three-fold objective: one, to set forth a conceptual framework in which the actions of nation-states may be more rigorously examined; two, to utilize the framework to analyse the reactions of three major powers to recent foreign policy crises; and three, to anticipate how the same powers are likely to view their national interests when they are obliged to deal with three probable future crises. One important qualification must be made at the outset: it is assumed that the leaders of all nation-states act rationally in the pursuit of state objectives, *i.e.* that states adopt policies which their leaders believe will advance the well-being of their societies, whatever the constitutional system. One is not asked to assess whether the actions of states are cost-effective, wise or moral under the circumstances in which they were made; it is assumed only that decisions are made with some degree of reasoning,

however wise or foolish they may be perceived by other states, or indeed by opposition groups within the state itself. It must also be assumed that political leaders of the state making decisions on war and peace are loyal to that state, *e.g.* that they operate on a set of values which puts the safety and economic well-being of their country at least as high as other states. Finally, the number of persons involved in making the determination of what is in the national interest will vary from state to state, depending on the type of government it has.

### *Definitions*

Most textbooks on international relations contain definitions of and some discussion on national interest. Several scholars have written an entire volume on the subject, among them Charles Beard, Hans Morgenthau, Joseph Frankel and this writer.<sup>1</sup> There is no accepted definition of national interest among scholars, and it seems appropriate here to suggest one which hopefully will stand up to the scrutiny of others. In its simplest form, *the national interest is the perceived needs and desires of one sovereign state in relation to other sovereign states comprising the external environment.* Several points in this definition need elaboration: first, we are talking about the *perception* of state needs, which suggests that decisions about what is in the national interest are the result of a political process in which a country's leaders may hold different views on what that interest is, but ultimately come to a conclusion about the importance of a specific issue. Secondly, this definition deals with fully independent *sovereign* states, not with international organizations or dependent territories because, for better or worse, we still live in a world where decisions to use force, to impose trade restrictions, to enter alliances are made only by the governments of sovereign states. Thirdly, this definition draws a distinction between the external and the internal (domestic) environment of the state; the latter is usually referred to as the *public interest*.<sup>2</sup> Finally, this definition implies that we are talking about the interests of the nation-state in its entirety, not of private groups, bureaucracies or political organizations.

This brief definition of national interest does not, however, provide the scholar or decision-maker with any guidelines to help in identifying these interests. To do this, it is useful to divide the national interest of a country into four basic needs, or requirements, which form the underpinnings of

1. See Charles A. Beard, *The Idea of National Interest* (New York, 1934); Hans J. Morgenthau, *In Defense of the National Interest* (New York, 1951); Joseph Frankel, *National Interest* (London, 1970); Donald E. Nuechterlein, *United States National Interests in a Changing World* (Lexington, Ky.), 1973.

2. This does not mean to imply that the two spheres do not overlap considerably, as in the impact on the domestic economies of western Europe and the United States when the Arab oil countries imposed an oil embargo in 1973. It does suggest, however, that there is utility in thinking of *national* interests as the way in which a sovereign state interacts with its external environment, whereas the *public* interest is the way in which the sovereign state deals with its internal environment.

its foreign policies. These *basic national interests* may be described as follows<sup>1</sup>:

- (i) *Defence* interests: the protection of the nation-state and its citizens against the threat of physical violence directed from another state, and/or an externally inspired threat to its system of government.
- (ii) *Economic* interests: the enhancement of the nation-state's economic well-being in relations with other states.
- (iii) *World Order* interests: the maintenance of an international political and economic system in which the nation-state may feel secure, and in which its citizens and commerce may operate peacefully outside its borders.
- (iv) *Ideological* interests: the protection and furtherance of a set of values which the people of a nation-state share and believe to be universally good.<sup>2</sup>

It is obvious that these needs and desires are not mutually exclusive and that there must be compromises and trade-offs among them; but if one conceives of the national interest of a state, particularly a major power, as consisting of several kinds of interest competing for attention and resources, we may be able better to look at the decision-making processes of these states and determine more accurately why their leaders make the decisions they do.

#### *Intensities of interest*

In addition to identifying these four basic, underlying interests pursued by major sovereign states, it is essential to determine as accurately as possible the intensity of feeling their leaders have in specific international issues. For example, the government of a country may be concerned about events in another country; but the intensity of its concern will depend on a multitude of factors, among them: distance from its own borders, composition of the government in question, amount of trade carried on, historical relationships between the countries, etc. Thus, the degree to which policy makers become alarmed about events in another country results from a process of thinking through the values and potential costs

1. The order in which these four basic interests appear does not suggest any priority of one over another, although it might be argued that, unless a nation-state has the capability of defending its territory and citizens (either through a strong military force or alliance with a major power), none of the other three basic interests is likely to matter much. Czechoslovakia in 1938 is an example. Ideology for some states may be more important than either economic advancement or a stable world order.

2. As used here, ideological interest refers to the values which a nation-state believes to be important. Obviously, states differ widely regarding the values they feel are important and the extent to which they are willing to defend or compromise them. In its extreme form, ideology can be fascism, Leninism or a Spanish Inquisition. It should also be noted that this discussion does not concern moral or immoral *behaviour* of states – only the degree to which values affect perceptions of interest. Too often a state may think it is operating on the basis of high moral standards while other states are convinced it is acting in an arrogant or deceitful manner.

involved and, ultimately, of reaching some decision about the level of concern which the state should express. This process implies trade-offs among the four basic interests outlined above. For example, a change in government through a *coup d'etat* may be distasteful to another state for both ideological and world order reasons; but if there are important economic ties with that country and no threat to one's own territory, the tendency will be to subordinate ideological concerns and potential security problems to economic considerations. In the case of capitalist states, this trade-off is often made; in the case of communist and socialist states, ideological factors are likely to play a more important role in determining the trade-off.

To better analyse this process of determining the intensity of interest, another set of definitions is useful:

(i) *Survival* issues: when the very existence of a nation-state is in jeopardy, as a result of overt military attack on its own territory, or from the threat of attack if an enemy's demands are rejected. Hitler's ultimatums in the late 1930s are examples. The key to whether an issue is survival or not, in this differentiation, is that it must be an immediate, credible threat of massive physical harm by one nation-state on another. By this definition, there probably are no economic, world order, or ideological issues which qualify; only *defence* interests, as defined above, would reach this level of intensity. The distinction becomes more meaningful if the use of strategic nuclear weapons is factored into the equation: what is argued here is that *only* if the issue is at the survival level, *i.e.* that the very existence of the state is in jeopardy, would a government be justified on any rational ground in using large nuclear weapons against an enemy. The Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962 demonstrated this point.<sup>1</sup>

(ii) *Vital* issues: where serious harm will very likely result to the state unless strong measures, including the use of conventional military forces, are employed to counter an adverse action by another state, or to deter it from undertaking a serious provocation. A vital issue may, in the long run, be as serious a threat to a country's political and economic well-being as a survival issue; but time is the essential difference, and a vital issue usually provides a state with sufficient time to seek help from allies, bargain with the antagonist about a solution to the dispute, or take aggressive counter-measures to warn the enemy that it will pay a high price if the political, economic or military pressure is not withdrawn. Unlike survival issues, a vital matter may involve not only defence issues, but also economic, world order (alliance and national prestige) and in some cases ideological issues. For example, when the United States in 1971 imposed a 10 per cent surcharge on all imports in order to force its trading partners to accept a devaluation of the dollar, it signalled that its growing

1. If we say survival entails an immediate and credible threat to the very existence of a country and its form of government, then no economic, world order or ideological issue would qualify because they could not be similarly threatened individually. Only national defence entails immediate destruction.



balance of payments difficulties had reached the vital level. Similarly, when the Soviet Union intervened in Czechoslovakia in 1968 to put down the Dubcek regime, it had reached the point where its ideological and world order interests were vitally affected and strong measures were needed to cope with the problem.

(iii) *Major* issues: where the political, economic and ideological well-being of the state may be adversely affected by events and trends in the international environment and thus requires corrective action in order to prevent them from becoming serious threats (vital issues). Most issues in international relations fall into this category and usually are resolved through diplomatic negotiations. It is when diplomatic talks fail to resolve such disputes that they can become dangerous. Governments must then decide how deeply their interests are affected by the event or trends in question; if in the final analysis a government is unwilling or unable to compromise on what it considers to be a fundamental question, it has implicitly ascertained that the issue is a vital one. On the other hand, if compromise is a possible course of action, then the issue probably is a major one. Most economic problems between states are major, not vital issues; the same is true of ideological issues, although states sometimes cloak other issues in ideological garb in an effort to mobilize public opinion at home and abroad. World order issues are different, however, because these usually affect a country's feeling of security and are more difficult to compromise. Germany and France between the world wars found it difficult to compromise on many issues because of their deep feelings of insecurity. U.S.-Soviet relations in the 1950s and 1960s suffered from similar suspicions of one another's intentions, which made compromise on issues involving arms limitations impossible.

(iv) *Peripheral* issues: where the well-being of the state is not adversely affected by events or trends abroad, but where the interests of private citizens and companies operating in other countries might be endangered. Obviously, the large and powerful multi-national corporations usually are given a higher priority by the parent nation-state because their earnings and their taxes have a significant effect on the economic well-being of those states. When a major oil company's assets are nationalized, for example by Peru and Libya, this is treated as a major issue by the parent state, particularly if inadequate compensation is paid for the property. Each nation-state sets its own priority on how greatly it values commercial enterprises operating abroad: for some states, these constitute major issues of national interest, but for others they are only of peripheral interest. Some economic issues that formerly were considered *vital* are no longer so: the willingness of the oil importing countries to accept the oil exporting nations' huge price increases in 1973, as well as their acquiescence in the nationalization of major oil companies, was a clear signal that these were no longer vital issues, but major ones which could be negotiated.

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One way of analysing the intensity of national interests is to select a country and an important foreign policy crisis it faced in the past and assess its actions in the following way:

FIGURE A

Country X		Issue Y		
		<i>Intensity of interest</i>		
<i>Basic interest involved</i>	<i>Survival</i>	<i>Vital</i>	<i>Major</i>	<i>Peripheral</i>
Defence				
Economic				
World order				
Ideological				

An example to illustrate the matrix is the Suez Crisis of 1956, when the Eden Government in Britain decided to use force against Nasser because of his abrupt nationalization of the canal. An analysis of British policy decisions during this crisis might come to the following conclusions: the Eden Government decided that Britain's economic interests were so endangered by the potential closure of the canal that it could not compromise with Nasser on this issue. Therefore, the intensity of British interest was perceived by the Eden Government to be a *vital economic* one, and it had to be met with force because Colonel Nasser refused to negotiate suitable guarantees on use of the canal. But other interests of Britain were also involved: Nasser was seen as a threat to western-oriented governments in the Middle East (World Order interest) and he was clearly moving his country into a close relationship with the Soviet Union as well as following an anti-democratic course at home (Ideological interest). Thus, world order and ideological interests, although not at the same level of intensity as the economic interest, were also important, and Eden therefore decided against compromise with Nasser and for the use of force to deal with the issue. We may therefore postulate the following about how Britain viewed its interests in October 1956, and from this conclude that force was likely to be used by Eden:

FIGURE B

Country: Britain		Issue: Suez Canal 1956		
		<i>Intensity of interest</i>		
<i>Basic interest involved</i>	<i>Survival</i>	<i>Vital</i>	<i>Major</i>	<i>Peripheral</i>
Defence				X
Economic		X		
World order			X	
Ideological			X	

One can also use this framework to analyse Soviet actions in the spring of 1972 when the U.S. government decided to mine Haiphong Harbour in North Vietnam, in order to bring pressure on Hanoi to negotiate a satisfactory end to the war. Many American observers viewed this as a serious provocation of the Soviet Union, which had supplied Hanoi with large quantities of war materials by sea and given it strong political support throughout the struggle against Saigon and U.S. forces. The Nixon Administration calculated that Moscow's interest was not so large that it would risk war with the United States *if* the provocation was limited, which spreading mines in a harbour was presumed to be. If we use the matrix to assess how Moscow viewed its own interests, we might conclude that it did not have any vital interest at stake so long as the North Vietnamese regime was not threatened. Therefore, it was not likely to use force against the United States.

FIGURE C

Country: U.S.S.R.

Issue: Mining Haiphong Harbour, 1972

Basic interest involved	Survival	Intensity of interest		Peripheral
		Vital	Major	
Defence				X
Economic			X	
World order			X	
Ideological			X	

In some ways, the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962 was similar to the Haiphong Harbour mining because it involved a contest between the super-powers, in which each had to assess carefully the intensity of its own interest as well as that of its antagonist because there was some risk of nuclear war. Judging by the outcome, and the facts now available concerning the decision-making process, it is apparent that both the United States and the Soviet Union thought they had vital interests at stake, although different ones; in the end, Moscow was more willing to compromise than was Washington and was perceived by the world to be the loser in that contest. The perceived interests of the two super-powers may be described as follows:

FIGURE D

Country: United States - X  
U.S.S.R. - Y

Issue: Cuban missile crisis 1962

Basic interest involved	Survival	Intensity of interest		Peripheral
		Vital	Major	
Defence		X	Y	
Economic			X	Y
World order		X	Y	
Ideological		Y	X	



The key point here is that it is the *comparison* of intensities of interests of the parties to a crisis which is at the heart of this analysis; for if this process of working through the comparative intensities of national interests is done in a coldly dispassionate manner, it is my view that fewer miscalculations about an antagonist's intentions and reactions to crises will result. However, it is also essential to keep in mind that there is no magic formula; or foolproof system, which will guarantee correct assessment in advance of a crisis: what is suggested here is a more rigorous method of analysis, not a scientific formula for measuring inputs and outputs. The decision-making process in foreign policy remains an art, not a science, in this writer's view; the intensity of national interest is a dynamic process which is constantly affected by different variables. The task of the scholar, and the policy-maker, is to employ the most precise tools of analysis possible in order to produce the most reasonable judgments of given circumstances. The emphasis is, therefore, on the process of examination. If the conclusions prove to be correct and mistakes in judgment are fewer, then the methodology has served its purpose.

*Deciding which interests are vital*

A correct estimate of how a nation-state facing a potentially dangerous situation will act to protect itself hinges, in the final analysis, on how well the political leadership calculates the interests of its country and the intensity of interest perceived by the country's antagonists. Therefore, what are the criteria that should be used to measure the vital interests of all major parties involved in a crisis?

It is obvious that nation-states have certain values which the people of the state share in some important measure. Language is the most common one, but history and culture are also bonds holding peoples together in states. The task of the scholar, and the policy-maker, is to assess which of these values are important in formulating the state's national interests, and the extent to which they condition foreign policy decisions made by political leaders. Listed below are eight *value* factors which influence the thinking of government leaders when they think about events and problems beyond their own borders:

(i) *Proximity of the danger*

This factor applies primarily to defence and world order interests, more than to economic and ideological interests. A nation's feeling of security has traditionally had much to do with the distance of the threat from its own borders. The age of the long-range bomber and the intercontinental missile have reduced the importance of this factor; but in terms of public attitudes, there is still more interest in developments in a neighbouring country than in a country far distant. In the 1960s for example, the American people were deeply disturbed by Castro's turning Cuba into a Communist state, but little concerned about similar events in Laos.

*(ii) Nature of the threat*

For a western country, a distinction usually is drawn between an overt act of aggression, as Korea in 1950, and internal wars such as Vietnam and Angola, even though the latter were supported from the outside. Communist countries probably do not make such a distinction because both are seen in class warfare or anti-imperialist terms. Nevertheless, major powers weigh their own national interests to a large extent in terms of the level of the conflict and the dangers it poses to interests elsewhere. In 1975, for example, the United States did not intervene in Angola largely because this was viewed by the Congress as an internal struggle among the Angolans. Yet, few voices in Congress criticized President Ford when he warned Cuba early in 1976 that if Cuban troops were used elsewhere in Africa the United States would take action.

*(iii) Economic stake*

Clearly a nation's commerce and investment in another country condition its view of its interests; and this often leads to trade-offs among basic interests, as Britain found in its view toward Rhodesia and South Africa. This factor probably is less important today than it was a generation ago, when nations were more willing to take strong measures to protect investments abroad. It is also doubtful that Communist states place as much emphasis on economic factors in determining their national interests.

*(iv) Sentimental attachment*

This factor affects countries like the United States, Canada and Australia more than others because of their large immigrant populations. The influential Greek minority in the United States exerted decisive influence on American policy toward Turkey in 1975 because of its strong attachment for the Greek Cypriots uprooted by the Turkish Army in Cyprus. American Jewry exerts an enormous influence on U.S. policy in the Middle East. The fact that Canadian and Australian forces joined with the British upon the outbreak of World War II stemmed from the strong sentimental attachment to Britain, not because either country was directly threatened in 1939.

*(v) Type of government*

This factor forms part of a nation's ideological interest and probably is more important for communist and socialist states than for democratic regimes which emphasize individual rights. The reason is that the latter have too often compromised their ideology by supporting authoritarian governments, whereas communist states consistently emphasize the solidarity of all socialist countries. The United States in the post-World War II period was guilty of considerable hypocrisy on this point because its rhetoric supporting freedom and democracy was not matched by denial of aid to a number of military dictatorships around the world.

(vi) *Effect on balance of power*

This factor is little understood by the mass population in most countries, but it is one of the most important value factors for the policy-maker. It has to do with world order interests primarily because of concerns over security; but it may also affect economic and defence interests. No great power can afford to ignore what happens to smaller countries in various parts of the world because the psychological effects of governments changing political allegiances affects the world power balance. Chile is a case in point: the elevation of Allende to the premiership signalled to all of Latin America that Chile had moved away from the American sphere of influence and wanted closer relations with the Soviet sphere, even though it was not a Soviet satellite. It was a considerable gain for the Soviet side of the international contest for influence, and a loss for the United States. Since the accession to power of the military in Chile, neither the Soviets nor the United States claims solidarity with that hapless country. Egypt's abandoning co-operation with the Soviet Union and South Vietnam's removal from the United States sphere in the mid-1970s were other instances of balance of power factors affecting the national interests of nation-states.

(vii) *National prestige*

This factor is more important for some states than for others, but all major and super-powers value it in some degree. In a word, it is the degree to which a state cares how other states view it, *i.e.* whether it is perceived as being trustworthy, realistic in pursuit of goals, maintaining political support at home, etc. States which pursue unrealistic or contradictory policies soon lose credibility, or prestige, with other states, both friends and antagonists. Success is an important part of prestige. That is why British prestige dropped over the Suez issue in 1956, and why Soviet prestige dropped after the Cuba Missile Crisis. The United States decline in credibility also suffered after the fall of Vietnam in 1975. In each case, the power was humiliated because it could not achieve a goal on which it has staked its prestige.

(viii) *Attitude of allies and friends*

Few nation-states today can afford to ignore the views of other states, particularly allies, in the pursuit of their national interests. This is particularly true of democratic states possessing open societies because a free press and public forums make it probable that leaders will be influenced by opinions of friendly governments. This was clearly true of the United States during the Truman and Eisenhower administrations: both presidents valued the views of their European allies whenever crisis situations arose. The European Community clearly binds the nine members together in closer association than before and causes each to pay far greater attention to the views of its partners than would have been

thinkable a generation ago. Even the Soviet Union consults with its eastern European allies before taking important economic or political decisions affecting them, even though its military power in eastern Europe might suggest that this is unnecessary.

Values are only one part of the process of assessing whether an interest is vital, however. This is because a decision that something is vital implies that it should not be compromised and that a likely outcome of the dispute might entail the use of armed forces. Therefore, when determining whether a vital interest is at stake, policy-makers and political leaders must also calculate the potential costs of refusing to compromise on an important issue and running the risk of war. Listed below are eight *cost* factors which leaders usually take into account:

(i) *Economic costs of conflict*

If an economic or world order issue is so important that hostilities might result, such hostilities can take several forms, including trade embargoes, economic sanctions and limited armed intervention. In all such instances, there will be economic costs to the state taking such measures. When the United States imposed a trade embargo on Cuba, this affected the commerce of American business and shut off the supply of Cuban sugar to U.S. markets. When Britain decided to use force against Nasser in 1956, this action had financial consequences for sterling, and affected British shipping interests. The great economic costs of American intervention in Vietnam were only dimly apparent in 1965 when the intervention began. The probable costs of intervention, or embargoes on trade, need to be carefully calculated in advance and weighed against the value factors cited above.

(ii) *The number of troops needed*

If armed intervention is considered a likely consequence of 'no compromise' on a vital issue, policy-makers should be reasonably clear about what the manpower needs for a limited war are likely to be, the likely level of hostilities and the probable casualties. In advising the President what the manpower needs would be for armed intervention in Vietnam, the Secretary of Defence grossly underestimated the size of the force needed to contain North Vietnamese-sponsored warfare in South Vietnam. Conversely, when the Soviets intervened to put down the Hungarian Freedom Fighters in 1956, they used a massive amount of force and ended the insurrection in a short period of time. The size of the force used and the potential casualties are important factors for a free society to assess correctly because they are crucial in calculating public reaction to an intervention. The U.S. intervention in the Dominican Republic in 1965 did not result in widespread opposition in the United States, in large part because the force employed was modest and casualties were small.

(iii) *The probable duration of hostilities*

This factor is closely tied to (ii) because the longer the conflict, the larger the casualties and the greater the need to enlarge the force. It is probably universally true that a nation believing it can accomplish its objectives through the limited use of force for a short period of time is more likely to undertake such action than if it knows in advance that the war will be long and costly. This is true of totalitarian regimes as well as democratic ones. In this writer's view, the United States would not have intervened in Vietnam in 1965 had it calculated that the war could not be ended in one year.

(iv) *The risks of enlarged conflict*

This point is always considered when limited military force is contemplated, but it is not always correctly calculated. In large measure, it is a matter of good intelligence – to clearly understand the concerns and intentions of *all* nation-states affected by a planned intervention. The miscalculations flowing from misperceptions of intentions by other states have too often resulted in unwanted and costly wars. If Stalin had known in 1950 that Truman would intervene to repel an attack on South Korea, would he have given his blessing to North Korea's plan to unify the country by force? Conversely, had Truman known that China would intervene in that war if American forces were permitted to move to the Yalu River, would he have given General MacArthur the authority to take his forces north? Again, it is probably a general case that if national leaders knew in advance that limited interventions would result in greatly enlarged conflicts, there would be far fewer such interventions.

(v) *The likelihood of success*

This factor is closely linked to the previous considerations but adds one element: even if the issue is deemed to be so important that it cannot be compromised and is, therefore thought to be vital, will the limited use of conventional force succeed in bringing about the desired result? This is an extremely difficult question because, on the one hand, the value attached to the issue may be very high, but the potential level of warfare may also be high – raising the question whether the objective is important enough to risk the use of tactical nuclear weapons. It is clear that if the basic interest involved is "defence of homeland", the likelihood of taking that risk is higher than would be the case of defending a country far removed from the homeland (world order interest). When China intervened in Korea in 1950, President Truman publicly speculated about using the atomic bomb to halt the Chinese drive, but was persuaded both by his European allies and domestic opinion that this would not be a wise move. Thus, the conventional Korean conflict then continued for three more years. The record shows that the Soviet Union threatened Britain and France with a large war in November 1956 only after it was sure that the United States would not support its allies in their invasion of Egypt.



*(vi) The reaction of domestic opinion*

An open democratic society must always calculate this cost, and it is probably a general rule that public opinion supports limited wars when they commence but loses patience when they are not brought to a speedy conclusion. Although public opinion does not generally operate as a brake in communist or other totalitarian states, the leadership of a communist government must take into account the views of the party members even though the party is far more tightly controlled than in freely elected representative governments.

*(vii) World reaction*

Condemnation by other states, particularly if the issue is taken to the United Nations, is a cost that must be calculated by decision-makers when contemplating whether an issue is worth fighting for. Major and super-powers often ignore international opinion when the issue is a vital one, as Czechoslovakia was to the U.S.S.R. in 1968, Tibet was to China in 1958 and East Pakistan was to India in 1971. However, in such cases, the state doing the intervening gives greater attention on the value scale to the attitude of allies and friends. There is usually a trade-off here. For lesser powers, the attitude of the United Nations and world opinion might have a greater influence on their decisions.

*(viii) The impact on internal politics*

In a western democratic system, the party in power always takes into account the political price that will have to be paid if an armed intervention turns out to be politically unpopular. Political leaders usually try to obtain non-partisanship support for decisions involving the use of forces in order to share responsibility for the costs. Truman and Eisenhower were especially diligent in seeking support from their Congressional opposition parties. This is not always true, however; Eden did not consult his opposition before launching the Suez expedition, and Lyndon Johnson did not get a vote of support from Congress for his massive intervention in Vietnam. Both left office in humiliation. In the Soviet Union, China and other totalitarian states, the leadership also struggles to convince the opposition of the rightness of its policy; but in these systems the number of leaders participating is far smaller than in a western system. If the leadership in a Communist state pursues a course that turns out to be disastrous, it is likely to be replaced, as Khrushchev was after his debacle in Cuba in 1962, and as Brezhnev might have been had the intervention in Czechoslovakia in 1968 proved disastrous. Leadership in any system has to contend with its opposition in matters which involve the use of the armed forces abroad, and the risks are higher when a leader has limited political support than when he enjoys broad political support.

This analysis of the values and costs which political leaders of nation-states should, and usually do, take into account when deciding whether

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an international issue is of *vital* importance to their national interests can also be employed to determine the difference between a major interest and a peripheral interest, and also between a vital and a survival interest. However, the measures used to deal with a problem would change; for example, if the issue is how to respond to a protective tariff imposed by a major trading nation, there is no likelihood that force would be contemplated; but strong economic countermeasures could be taken if the intensity of interest is perceived as major, or a mild protest would be made if the intensity of interest is peripheral. Similarly, if the issue is borderline between vital and survival, as the Cuban Missile Crisis was for the U.S. government in 1962, then the question is whether to use nuclear weapons if all other measures fail to bring about the desired result. For purposes of this discussion, however, it is more fruitful to deal with the question of vital interests because most international crises during the past twenty-five years have been in this category and have resulted in the greatest number of mistakes in judgment by national leaders. This discussion is focused, therefore, on analysing the question: "How can decisions about a nation-state's vital interests be more accurately assessed, in order that fewer mistakes are made?"

#### *Utilization of the framework in future crises*

The examples used above to illustrate how this conceptual framework may be utilized in analysing the intensity of a nation-state's interests are taken from past crises where considerable documentation is available. The real challenge, however, is to anticipate future crises among major powers, and I suggest that this framework can also be utilized for this purpose. Military planners have used war-gaming techniques for many years, and a number of scholars have developed crisis-management models to help students of international politics and policy-makers understand the decisions of national leaders in crisis situations. The purpose of this framework is to step back slightly from the point of decision-making and analyse the basic values which condition the attitudes of government leaders *before* they are faced with a crisis. In other words, what are the perceived values which undergird the national interests of states, and how does a given society look at potential costs in relation to these values?

To answer these questions adequately requires a detailed examination of the culture and psychology of the nation-states involved in international crises and is a proper function of scholarship. For example, to what extent is it true that totalitarian states place less emphasis on the expenditure of human life (casualties) than do democratic societies when engaged in warfare? Evidence from the Korean War seems to indicate that China had little regard for human life when it sent waves of its troops to certain death in its offensives in 1951 and 1952. Conversely, American casualties in Korea and later in Vietnam were far less, but they caused severe repercussions on political leaders and military commanders.

Similarly, the record seems to show that U.S. policy-makers during the past thirty years have been willing to take more risks of intervention outside their immediate regions than has the Soviet Union. To what extent has this been a result of better capabilities for doing so, or of different sets of values? This type of question requires a broader study than is possible here; but it should be possible to make some tentative assumptions in order to assess how different national leaderships view their own national interests, in terms of the framework set out above.

In order to illustrate how the framework might be used to assess future crises, we can take three potential crises which would involve the major, and perhaps vital, interests of three major powers today: the United States, Soviet Union and Great Britain. The three future crises contemplated are: one, the outbreak of serious fighting between Panamanian and American forces in the Panama Canal Zone, with Cuba providing active support to the Panamanians; two, the outbreak of warfare in the Republic of South Africa, with the Soviet Union and Cuba providing active support to black nationalists; three, civil war in Yugoslavia, following Marshal Tito's death, with the Warsaw Pact (led by the U.S.S.R.) and NATO (led by the United States) providing support to different sides. How would the national interests of the three powers be perceived in these crises, and what policy decisions would be likely to flow from their leaders' perception of these interests?

In the first case - Panama - it is clear that the United States would view the outbreak of large-scale violence there as affecting its historical and vital sphere of influence and would react strongly to any attempt of another great power to interfere. But what national interests would be perceived by the Soviet Union and Britain, both of which have some interests in the Caribbean area? Analysts may differ in their appraisal of this situation, and the following estimate is suggested as one scholar's view, based on his knowledge of the three powers involved:

FIGURE E

X - United States  
Y - Soviet Union  
Z - Great Britain

Issue: *Warfare in Panama*

Basic interest involved	Survival	Intensity of interest		
		Vital	Major	Peripheral
Defence		X		Y Z
Economic			X Z	Y
World order		X	Y Z	
Ideological		Y	X	Z

In this appraisal, Panama is clearly a vital defence and a vital world interest of the United States, but *not* of either the Soviets or the British, whose interests are judged to be major or peripheral. The one exception could



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be a vital ideological interest of the Soviet Union in supporting the Cubans if their involvement in a Panamanian struggle should bring on the threat of American retaliation against Cuba itself. The Soviets might well give political support to the Panamanians, but it would not be in their interest to cause a confrontation with the United States because of Panama - any more than it was in the U.S. interest to have a confrontation with Moscow over the Czechoslovakia issue in 1968. The conclusion that could be drawn from this limited analysis of the Panama situation is that the United States would not be seriously opposed by either of the other powers in dealing with the crisis. However, there may well be a high political cost to pay for a large American intervention there, as the Soviets found in 1968.

In the second future crisis situation - South Africa - the scenario involves a black African war of attrition against the Republic of South Africa, to force it to grant independence to Namibia and to end apartheid. Cuban troops stationed in Angola would be used in support of Angolan forces and other southern African insurgents, in a drive to 'liberate' Namibia and force political changes in South Africa. Again, one scholar's analysis of how the three powers would view their national interests is as follows:

FIGURE F

Issue: *War in South Africa*

Basic interest involved	Survival	Intensity of interest			Peripheral
		Vital	Major		
Defence					X Y Z
Economic			X Z		Y
World order		Z	X Y		
Ideological			X Y Z		

This estimate of national interests suggests that neither the United States nor the Soviet Union has a vital interest in southern Africa, but that Britain may have a vital world order interest there because of the implications of this conflict for the future security of South Africa, which has large British investments, a large English-speaking population and historical political ties with Britain. Thus, it is reasonable to assume that Britain would take the lead in supporting South Africa to put down an attack while seeking a compromise solution on the diplomatic front. Britain would, of course, want support from the United States and the European Community for its effort, knowing that the Cubans and Black Africans would have Soviet Union support. It is not likely that this crisis would involve intervention by the Soviet Union or the United States, however, although both have major world order interests there.

In the final scenario - Yugoslavia - Marshal Tito has died, Moscow-oriented communists are making a serious bid for power and are being

supplied with arms from the Soviet Union and other eastern European states. These forces are opposed by the Yugoslav government, made up of moderate national communists, socialists and other groups determined to prevent Yugoslavia from being dominated by Moscow. Various national groups within the state may be working for independence (Croatia, for example). The moderate forces appeal to NATO and other countries for arms and take an anti-Soviet stance. In this situation, what would be the interests of Britain, the United States and the Soviet Union? One appraisal is the following:

FIGURE G

Issue: *Civil war in Yugoslavia*

Basic interest involved	Survival	Intensity of interest		Peripheral
		Vital	Major	
Defence			Y	X Z
Economic			Y	X Z
World order		Y	X Z	
Ideological		Y	X Z	

The conclusion suggested here is that only the Soviet Union has a vital interest in Yugoslavia, and that this interest stems from its fear that if Yugoslavia moves further away from Moscow's brand of communism – particularly if the moderate government moves toward closer co-operation with the European Common Market countries on economic matters, other eastern European countries would also try it. The precedent of Czechoslovakia in 1968 is a real one. If this assessment is correct, the Soviet Union could be expected to provide arms to the dissident forces and to launch a strong political campaign against the Belgrade government. If Soviet forces intervened directly, this would pose a serious crisis for NATO – particularly if it involved the Soviet Navy in the Adriatic near Italian territory. In this case, the strategic threat might edge the U.S. world order interest closer to *vital* and thus increase the likelihood of a super-power confrontation. In the absence of Soviet forces being used, however, the West probably would not intervene to save the moderate forces if they were losing the struggle.

### *Conclusions*

The purpose of presenting the above scenarios in such sketchy fashion is not to provide definitive answers to how the three powers would react in these crisis situations, but rather to illustrate how a conceptual framework such as this may be used to assess the values and costs perceived by the leaders of several nation-states with important interests in several crisis points in the world. Obviously, other students of international politics and various policy-makers will have their own views on where the checks

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should be placed on the matrixes shown above; and to do this analysis properly, the scenarios should be given in greater detail. A group of students or specialists should then be asked to work through individually the value questions and the cost factors for each of the three countries (and perhaps additional countries), and their final scores should be compared to see where the convergencies and divergencies lie. What is sought is consensus among the participants in the exercise as to what the national interests are, *not* predictions of actions that might be taken by the countries involved. It is the view of this writer that prediction of a nation-state's probable course of action is the proper role of war-gaming, but that reaching consensus on the importance of an issue is the proper role of the specialist in national interest assessment. The difference probably lies in the role of the military planner as compared with the task of the intelligence specialist.

My conclusion is that policy decisions of what to do about crises must rest on far more rigorous examination of how nation-states view their vital interests, and on far greater appreciation by policy-makers of the political, social, psychological and cultural factors which cause the leaders of other nation-states to view the world differently than they do. Ultimately, political leaders must decide whether an interest is so important that the risks of war must be taken to defend it; but such risks must be based on greater clarity than has often been the case in assessing the basis on which an antagonist also takes risks. This is the role of the scholar, the intelligence specialist on foreign countries, the dispassionate journalist - those who do not let feelings of one's own country's interests blur their perception of why another nation-state views the world differently and will react differently. This elaboration of the concept of national interest will, I believe, facilitate the process of foreign policy analysis, and may even result in more realistic judgments being made by policy-makers about ends and means in formulating foreign policies.

#### *Author's Note*

In May 1976 the framework outlined in this paper was successfully tried out on a group of students from the University College of Wales during a three-day crisis game conducted at the conference centre, Gregynog Hall, near Newtown in Wales. These forty students from Aberystwyth and Swansea were engaged in a crisis exercise concerned with the Middle East, and the group was divided into fourteen teams representing thirteen countries plus the P.L.O., either located in or having important interests in that region. Before the game started, but after the teams had read packets of background material on their countries, the team leaders were provided with a brief explanation on the national interest and were asked to evaluate their countries' interests in terms of a conceptual framework. Students were provided (Table 1) with a brief outline of definitions used in this paper as well as a listing of the value and cost factors which might be used to determine whether an issue is vital or not. The second sheet (Table 2) contained the matrix used above, but with the difference that a number system

was substituted for the terms "Survival", "vital" etc. Team leaders were asked to consider how deeply their country's interest was affected by the crisis outlined to them before the game started, with a score of ten implying a survival of the country, and a score of one meaning very little concern. They were asked to choose four numbers on that scale - one for each of the four basic national interests - which most closely reflected their level of concern about their countries' interests in light of the crisis laid before them. The same questionnaire was given to team leaders again half-way through the game, and again at the conclusion. There were thus three sets of evaluations of national interests for thirteen countries, plus the P.L.O.

After completion of the game, the scores were tabulated and distributed a few days later to team leaders (Table 3). Countries were grouped into three categories: those which appeared from the scores to be "relatively secure", those which appeared to be "moderately insecure", and those whose scores showed them to be "very insecure". After reviewing the tabulation, team leaders were given an opportunity to comment and to ask questions of each other. Two main conclusions emerged from the scores and from the discussion: (1) number of country teams showed signs of greater insecurity as the game progressed; and (2) team leaders acknowledged that their moves during the game tended to be more responsible because they had been forced to assess the national interests of their countries before the game commenced. When asked to comment on whether the numbering system was more, or less, helpful in assessing the degree of interest than the four categories (survival, vital, major, peripheral) would have been, the consensus was that the 1-10 numbering provided greater flexibility in determining levels of intensity, but that the four terms would have simplified the choices. On the basis of this trial, the Department of International Politics at Aberystwyth decided to use the national interest exercise in future crisis games and to modify it in light of experience.

TABLE I

*Determination of the national interest*

The national interest is the perceived needs and desires of one sovereign state in relation to other sovereign states comprising the external environment.

The national interest may be divided into four basic needs or requirements which account for all of a country's foreign policies. These basic national interests are:

1. *Defence interests*: the protection of the nation-state against the threat of physical violence directed from another state, and/or an externally inspired threat to the political and economic system of government.
2. *Economic interests*: the enhancement of the nation-state's economic well-being in relations with other states.
3. *World order interests*: the maintenance of an international political and economic framework in which the nation-state may feel secure, and in which its citizens and commerce are protected abroad.
4. *Ideological interests*: the furtherance in the external environment of a set of values which the nation-state believes to be universally good.

The criteria for assessing the importance of interests to a country include:

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TABLE I (contd.)

<i>Values</i>	<i>Costs</i>
1. Distance from home country	1. Economic costs of conflict
2. Nature of the problem	2. Number of troops needed and potential casualties
3. Economic stake in area	3. Probable duration of hostilities
4. Sentimental attachment	4. Risks of enlarged conflict
5. Type of government	5. Likelihood of success
6. Effect on balance of power	6. Reaction of domestic public opinion
7. National prestige involved	7. World reaction (United Nations)
8. Attitudes of allies and friends	8. Impact on political life

TABLE 2

*Gregynog crisis game*

Country:

3-5 May 1976

*National interests and foreign policy decision-making*Issue: *Middle East crisis - 1976*

<i>Basic national interests affected</i>	<i>Importance of the interest of your country</i>									
Defence of the homeland	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Economic well-being of the nation	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Preservation of a favourable world order (regional balance of power)	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Enhancement of the nation's ideology abroad (values)	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

The team leader is asked to consult with his/her team after reading carefully the crisis scenario and reach a consensus before the game starts on how the issues affect the national interests of their country. Each team leader is requested to circle one number on each line to indicate the importance of the interest to his country. In the middle and at the end of the game you will be asked to complete another questionnaire to indicate how your perception of your country's national interests have been affected by the course of events during the crisis exercise.



TABLE 3

*Gregynog crisis game 3-5 May 1976**National interests and foreign policy decision-making: results of survey*

The results of the three surveys conducted at the crisis game are tabulated below.

<i>Degree of security/insecurity felt by country team</i>	<i>Before start of game</i>	<i>Mid-point</i>	<i>After completion of game</i>
A. <i>Relatively secure</i> (no score higher than 6)	France (3, 6, 6, 5) Saudi Arabia (2, 4, 3, 6) U.S.S.R. (3, 4, 5, 5) Jordan (6, 6, 5, 4)	France (3, 6, 5, 5)     Libya (5, 5, 6, 6)	France (3, 6, 5, 5) Saudi Arabia (2, 4, 4, 6)
B. <i>Moderately insecure</i> (no score higher than one 8)	U.S.A. (6, 6, 7, 5) U.K. (3, 8, 7, 6) Iran (8, 7, 7, 5) Egypt (7, 6, 8, 3) Libya (7, 8, 6, 5) Iraq (7, 6, 7, 6) Syria (8, 6, 7, 6)	U.S.A. (6, 5, 7, 4) U.K. (3, 7, 7, 2) Iran (8, 7, 7, 5) Egypt (7, 6, 8, 3)   Jordan (6, 7, 4, 3) U.S.S.R. (4, 5, 7, 6) Lebanon (6, 4, 8, 1) Saudi Arabia (3, 4, 6, 7)	U.S.A. (6, 6, 7, 4) U.K. (2, 7, 6, 1) Iran (7, 8, 5, 5) Egypt (7, 6, 8, 3) Libya (6, 6, 7, 5)   Jordan (8, 6, 4, 3) U.S.S.R. (3, 5, 7, 6) Lebanon (7, 6, 7, 2)
C. <i>Very insecure</i> (score of two 8s and above)	Israel (10, 8, 6, 4) P.L.O. (9, 7, 7, 6)   Lebanon (8, 8, 6, 4)	Israel (9, 8, 6, 4) P.L.O. (8, 6, 7, 8) Iraq (8, 8, 7, 6) Syria (8, 6, 8, 6)	Israel (10, 8, 6, 4) P.L.O. (8, 6, 7, 8) Iraq (8, 6, 9, 6) Syria (9, 6, 8, 5)

Scale: very insecure - 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 - completely secure.